



ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES

News Release

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CITY OF SAN DIEGO TO DESIGN FUTURE MUNICIPAL BUILDINGS TO MEET NEW EFFICIENCY STANDARD

*Proposed New Main Library, Several Library Branches and Fire Stations to be First LEED
"Silver Level" Certified in San Diego County*

SAN DIEGO, CA – The City of San Diego's proposed designs for the new Main Library and most of its new branches, along with six fire stations will make these buildings among the most efficient in the nation. Earlier this year, the City Council adopted the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) "Silver Level" rating system which provides design standards and guidelines to produce buildings that earn the "green" status, which means they are more energy efficient, economical to operate, and friendlier to the environment and workers.

"Implementing the LEED design standard in City facilities will not only move the City closer to fulfilling Goal #9 of pursuing energy independence that I established, but it will also be good for the environment and save taxpayers money," said Mayor Dick Murphy.

The City will apply the LEED "Silver Level" design standard to new municipal facilities and significant remodels larger than 5,000 square feet. On July 30, 2002 City Council approved the first major City buildings planned for LEED certification which include the proposed 378,863-square foot Main Library in Downtown's East Village, two fire stations (Central Mission Valley and Paradise Hills), and several remodeled library branches.

In addition, several existing fire stations will undergo extensive building improvements to meet the LEED design standard. These include Uptown/Hillcrest, San Ysidro, Mid-City, and Skyline/Paradise Hills fire stations.

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“By adopting the LEED design standard we will be able to reduce the City’s overall energy costs and explore new options for renewable energy production,” said Richard L. Hays, director of the City of San Diego Environmental Services Department.

Buildings that meet the LEED Silver Level standard use about 20 percent less electricity and water each year, according to the United States Green Building Council, which promotes sustainable building development and construction through the LEED program. While project budgets for the City’s LEED buildings may initially exceed normal construction budgets by approximately 10 to 13 percent, the pay back period is typically three to five years with significant savings for the remainder of the building’s life.

In addition, the City’s LEED buildings will be 12 to 17 percent more energy efficient than what is required by California’s Title 24 regulation, the nation’s most stringent energy standard, which was the City’s energy efficiency baseline for building design prior to the adoption of the LEED standard.

To meet the LEED standard and become certified, the buildings will be designed along five environmental principals: site sustainability, or design within environmental limits; water and energy efficiency; indoor environmental quality, and reduction and reuse of construction materials. The site sustainability includes landscaping to control erosion and heat islands, and providing alternative transportation facilities.

“Future City buildings will use about 35 percent recycled products, such as reinforcement bar for concrete,” said Hays. “To divert construction debris from the Miramar Landfill, items such as doors and ceiling panels will be reused whenever possible and reduced water use will be accomplished where ever possible by landscaping building surroundings with xeriscape (low water use) gardens and installing waterless urinals.”

Also, healthy indoor quality for building occupants will be achieved by the use of non-toxic construction materials including low volatile organic compound paint. As currently practiced in City buildings, City employees working in LEED certified buildings will implement active paper waste and plastics recycling programs.

To ensure all new buildings are constructed to meet the new LEED design standard, the City’s Environmental Services’ Energy Conservation and Management Division will review municipal building plans at the 30 and 90 percent construction drawing stages.

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Adopting the LEED standard is in keeping with the City's efforts last year to reduce energy use. Through the implementation of an emergency energy conservation program during 2001, the City avoided approximately \$3.2 million in energy expenses. Included in this plan was installing various energy conservation technologies in existing City buildings such as replacing old lighting fixtures with new energy efficient fluorescent lighting, remodeling some buildings' roof tops with skylights and setting up photovoltaic cells that produce energy to operate the building.

The City of San Diego will join approximately 40 other states in the country and eight foreign countries around the world that use the LEED standard in building design. The "Silver Level" is the second of four rating levels offered by the LEED program. The others include certified, which is the lowest, gold which is the middle and platinum which is the highest rating.

The City of San Diego's Environmental Services Department is charged with providing a broad range of services to protect San Diego's environmental quality including refuse collection and disposal, recycling and environmentally sound landfill management to meet the City's long-term disposal needs. The Department also oversees the City's management of energy, explores innovative options that create more energy independence, and works to advance more sustainable practices within the City organization and the community. For more information on recycling or Environmental Services, visit the department's website at <http://www.sandiego.gov/environmental-services/>.

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